

**San Jacinto River Waste Pits | Superfund Site**  
**Draft Community Involvement Plan      2015**

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN PURPOSE**

EPA's Community Involvement Plan (CIP) for the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site (Site) identifies tools and activities used to address community interests related to the Site. The Plan serves as a guide for EPA's public awareness program for the Site and provides the public with continuing opportunities for greater awareness about the project. The CIP provides descriptions of these tools and identifies how they are used to address community concerns and promote public awareness of the project's status. The CIP also contains Site-related references and a series of appendices designed to serve as resources for both EPA and the community. Specific sections include the EPA and project team, local government, and media contacts, and directions on how to obtain additional Superfund and EPA information.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN OVERVIEW**

This Community Involvement Plan recognizes and addresses the challenges presented by the variety of the communities near to the project Site as well as the interests of organizations and agencies engaged as stakeholders. Consistent with the goal of successful community involvement, this plan focuses on broad-based opportunities for disseminating project information and opportunities for interaction between the public and EPA staff and management. Community members and interested parties will continue to be given opportunities for both formal and informal input on a wide range of issues. However, it is important to note that the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA), commonly known as Superfund, and the regulations spelled out in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) govern EPA's response actions under the Superfund program. The statute and regulations require EPA to retain all decision-making authority and do not allow the Agency to delegate authority to citizens groups or other outside interests.

### **Community Involvement Plan (CIP) is a resource**

The CIP is a blueprint for public awareness of issues related to the Site cleanup project. It is a companion to a number of Site reports, plans, decision documents, and other sources of information that are and will be available for review. Because the precise timing of all activities and points for community awareness is dependent on overall project plans and milestones achieved, this CIP will remain an evolving document to be updated as appropriate as Site activity progresses.

## **CAPSULE SITE DESCRIPTION**

Impoundments containing waste from the former Champion International Pasadena Mill are located at the intersection of the Interstate Highway 10 Bridge and the San Jacinto River in Harris County, Texas. Sediment samples from within or close to these impoundments revealed high concentrations of dioxins. The Site was placed on the National Priorities List (NPL) of Sites slated for federal cleanup in March 2008, and cleanup began in December 2010.

The Site itself has no specific street address. In 1965, two waste impoundments were built by constructing berms within the estuarine marsh directly north of the former Texas State Highway 73 and now Interstate Highway 10 (I-10). The Site is west of the main river channel of the San Jacinto River, east of the City of Houston and northwest of Baytown, between two unincorporated areas known as Channelview and Highlands.

Currently, one of the two impoundments located directly north of the I-10 Bridge is partially submerged in the San Jacinto River. An additional impoundment located directly south of the I-10 Bridge is currently reflected in the Site Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS).

A Time Critical Removal Action (TCRA) addressed source stabilization within the 1966 original perimeter of the impoundments. The wastes in the impoundments are effectively contained by the temporary armored cap installed in 2011. Sampling indicates that the wastes are not leaking, and visual inspections as well as elevation surveys show that the cap is intact and stable. The armored cap includes three layers of protective geotextile and geo membrane covered by rock, and was designed and constructed in accordance with USEPA and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) design guidance to withstand major storms, including those that would only occur once every 100 years. The cap continues to be routinely monitored and maintained. *[Verbatim source of above text: EPA Fact Sheet – Aug. 2014]*

The RI/FS filed in 2014 addresses the nature and extent of contamination at or from this site.

After the Site is fully delineated, a complete description will be presented in the Record of Decision (ROD), along with Wastes and Volumes to be addressed by the Remedial Action.

For more information about the Site and current status of the process, visit:

[http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/texas/san\\_jacinto/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/texas/san_jacinto/index.html) <or>

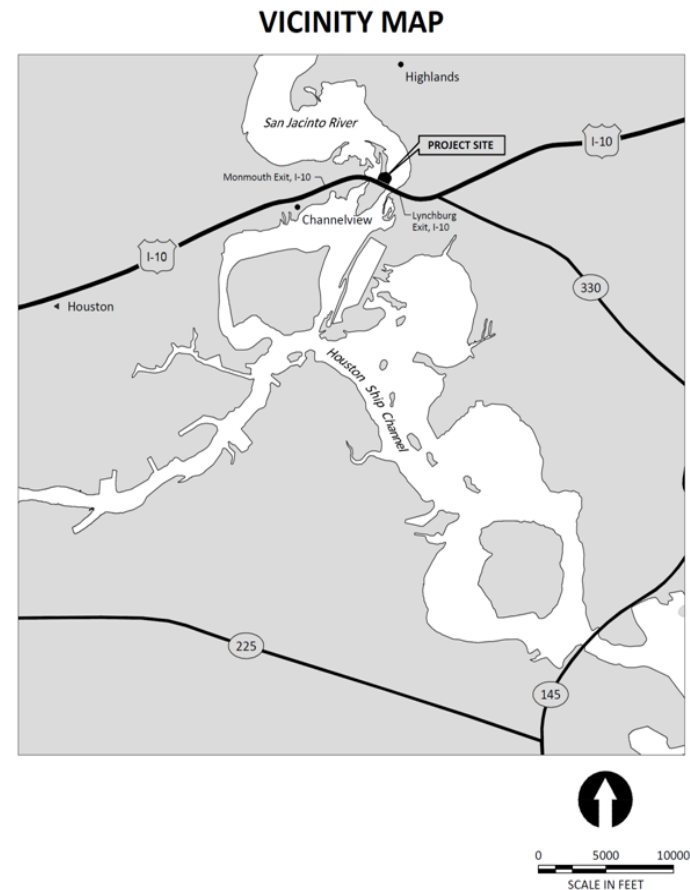
[http://www.epaosc.org/site/site\\_profile.aspx?site\\_id=6534](http://www.epaosc.org/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=6534)

## COMMUNITY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND CATEGORIES OF ADJACENT/RELATED POPULATIONS

The San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site is primarily located directly adjacent to **uninhabited commercial-industrial** acreage fronting the San Jacinto River and bounded by Texas Department of Transportation right-of-way beneath the Interstate 10 overpass.

The most immediately adjacent **residential** communities include the unincorporated areas known as Channelview and Highlands.





Following are representative demographic profiles of populations in adjacent zip codes as reflected in U.S. Census data report from 2005.

## 77530 (CHANNELVIEW, TX)

Race	
Hispanic/Latino:	37.4%
White*:	47%
Black*:	12.2%
Native American*:	0%
Asian*:	1.9%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander*:	0%
Other*:	0.1%
Multiracial*:	1%

*\* Does not include individuals  
in this racial group  
who identify as Hispanic/Latino.*

## 77562 (HIGHLANDS, TX)

Race	
Hispanic/Latino:	13.6%
White*:	79.3%
Black*:	5.3%
Native American*:	0%
Asian*:	0.4%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander*:	0%
Other*:	0%
Multiracial*:	1.1%

*\* Does not include individuals  
in this racial group  
who identify as Hispanic/Latino.*

## 77520 (BAYTOWN, TX)

Race	
Hispanic/Latino:	36.8%
White*:	51.7%
Black*:	9.4%
Native American*:	0%
Asian*:	0.5%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander*:	0%
Other*:	0.1%
Multiracial*:	1.1%

*\* Does not include individuals  
in this racial group  
who identify as Hispanic/Latino.*

In terms of gender and age, demographic reports within these zip codes indicate residents are generally divided 50/50 male/female and median ages range from 28.6 to 34.3 years old.

While the Site waste impoundments and adjacent areas are currently fenced and marked by no-trespassing signage, riverside and on-river areas in the general vicinity of the Site are frequented by individuals who comprise a **transitory community**. These individuals utilize the waterway primarily for outdoor recreation and/or fishing purposes. However, market research conducted in connection with this Community Involvement Plan indicates this migratory group of waterway users resides primarily in zip codes no more than approximately 1 mile to 10 miles from the Site. Further information about this community was derived and refined from research conducted for development of this CIP and is included in Appendix 1.

## KEY COMMUNITY NEEDS & CONCERNS

Community needs and concerns stemming from the Superfund process are being regularly and frequently ascertained as follows:

**Community Awareness Committee**: Representatives from a wide variety of agencies, including Harris County Precinct 2 in which the Site is located, and non-governmental agencies (see appendix) have participated actively since December 2009 in a “Community Awareness Committee” established under the auspices of U.S. EPA Region 6 and in collaboration with representatives from Harris County, Texas. This committee has met regularly, on a bi-monthly and/or monthly basis to frequently assess and give voice to ongoing community interests in connection with the Site. The primary areas of public interest expressed to date via this ongoing forum include:

- 1) Status and milestones related to the Site and project progress
- 2) Ongoing level of awareness of Site activities among interested/engaged citizens and local organizations
- 3) Comprehension of existing state fish consumption advisories and postings among waterway users

**Community Meetings:** With the establishment of Site fencing and subsequent sediment containment activities that commenced in December 2010, the U.S. EPA began hosting a series of local community-wide meetings aimed at addressing the interests and needs of nearby residents. These meetings occurred in July and December 2010 and again in May and July 2011. In addition, community meetings have been held in January 2014 and April 2015. Locations for these meetings have included Highlands and Channelview.

The primary areas of interest expressed to date via these forums are:

- 1) Milestones related to the Site and project progress
- 2) Status of the Site and its future remediation



## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT PLAN

### PRIMARY COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT GOALS:

- Foster awareness of the Site among: the public, county constituents, engaged community organizations and their members and stakeholders, and citizens in the area with an interest in or who interact with the Site and immediately surrounding areas
- Deliver consistent and timely information that explains and reinforces the sediment containment and other actions being taken and, where appropriate, reinforce existing public advisories
- Allow informal or other feedback and enable community involvement as desired and expressed among citizens through existing forums and/or contact with the EPA Region 6 through facilitation under the Community Engagement Initiative (CEI)

### COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF GOALS

Develop and deliver ongoing and effective community outreach tactics that:

- Strive to reasonably reach target audiences who come in contact with the Site or plan to return to the Site based on previous experiences at this location

- Leverage and enlist public sector and interested organizations in helping to deliver cogent messages to relevant audiences
- Utilize local and community-based news media, and promote EPA web site where appropriate, to amplify awareness and heighten public knowledge of the Site and associated risks

**Target Audiences and Messaging Needs:**

- ☐ Meet multi-lingual and multi-cultural communication requirements
- ☐ Develop and deliver simple, non-technical explanation of the Site's status
- ☐ Differentiate between and among audiences utilizing the following matrix:

[NOTE: LAST COLUMN ON FAR RIGHT IS NEWLY ADDED FOR THE 2015 UPDATE]

Target Audience	Outreach Channels	Information Desires	Frequency	Status
COMMUNITY AWARENESS COMMITTEE (CAC)	<p>Primary:</p> <p>Regular meetings conducted by EPA Reg. 6</p> <p>Secondary: Email</p>	Regular updates from EPA Reg. 6, project milestones, and progress toward community outreach and awareness among various public audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monthly</li> <li>As needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regular meetings held quarterly</li> <li>✓ Additional meetings as needed</li> </ul>
RESIDENTIAL or ADJACENT LANDOWNERS	<p>Primary:</p> <p>Community meetings in neighborhood</p> <p>Secondary: Contact with EPA</p>	Status of project and future milestones; other advisories of interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Semi-annually or more often, depending on status of project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Multiple EPA meetings held 2010-14</li> <li>✓ Additional meetings to be scheduled</li> </ul>
WATERWAY USER	<p>Primary: Direct at waterway</p> <p>Secondary: Media</p>	Fishing and waterway usage advisories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prior to and during activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ongoing site and area signage maintained</li> </ul>



## **Tools & Tactics**

**In addition to outreach channels represented in the target audience matrix, the following tools and tactics have been developed and utilized in connection with the Site:**

### *Site Signage*

- Durable, weather-proof and compelling graphical media that explains the Site's status and warns of trespassing or restricted access. The EPA imprimatur was used to reinforce this message.
- Determination of appropriate locations along project perimeter to assure enhanced awareness and prevent trespass

### *Flyers / Handbills*

- Simple, understandable messaging that replicates information contained on Site signage
- Distribute via local channels [area industrial locations, businesses, neighborhood centers, homeowners associations, schools, marinas, etc.] as deemed appropriate.
- Galveston Bay Foundation, a CAC participant, developed and completed distribution to a target list of locations, including optimal recreational locations used by the public.

*Special Interest Groups and Other Channels*

- Briefings or placement on regular meeting agendas as a means of providing information to key identified organizations others requesting EPA participation
- Web Site message material for use/posting by public agencies, relevant organizations and on recreation-oriented sites

## APPENDIX

### I. SITE RIVER-USER RESEARCH SUMMARY

**Summary:** A research initiative, conducted by de La Garza Public Relations of Houston, Texas, and executed by Lone Star Research on behalf of International Paper and McGinnes Industrial Maintenance Corporation (MIMC), was initiated in the Fall of 2010. The intent of the research was to determine and measure the knowledge, awareness, interests and demographics of waterway users near the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site (“Site”). Focus group and intercept interviews were conducted to seek insights on waterway usage, Site and signage awareness, user activities, preferred means of communication, frequency of river use, demographics, educational background and languages spoken.

**Focus Group Insights:** A focus group was developed and facilitated to determine the depth of knowledge and awareness of waterway users regarding the Site and help guide further research. Participants were recruited along the San Jacinto River near the Site who were observed fishing or using the riverbanks for recreational use. Twelve participants were recruited to participate (eight African-American and four Hispanic individuals). On Sept. 18, 2010, they gathered at the Crosby Library for an informal discussion facilitated by a market research specialist.

The quality and quantity of fish and crabs were reported as the main reason for use of the waterway. Secondary use included recreational activity, such as picnicking or playing at local parks. Most participants were not familiar with fencing surrounding the Site until the specific area involved was depicted or clarified.

There was generally a lack of concern voiced about air or water pollution issues. However, participants indicated they would like to be made aware of these issues if documented pollution exists. Many suggested an increase in signage as a means of communication.

**Intercept Results:** Following a period of general reconnaissance in areas surrounding the Site, from March 10, 2011 to April 12, 2011, researchers canvassed locations surrounding the Site. Of 176 individuals intercepted, 100 indicated use of the area for recreational or fishing purposes.

- 43 percent reported using the waterway for both fishing and crabbing
- 29 percent reported using the waterway only for fishing
- 22 percent reported using the waterway only for crabbing
- 4 percent reported using the waterway for general outdoor activity, picnics or swimming

The majority were intercepted at Riverside Terrace Park. Researchers noted that survey participants tend to move between Riverside Terrace Park, the bridge near Interstate 10 and the islands in Burnett Bay.

- 50 percent of participants were intercepted at Riverside Terrace Park
- 38 percent were intercepted near the bridge on either side of Interstate 10
- 12 percent were intercepted at the islands in Burnett Bay or near the Lynchburg Ferry

Of those intercepted, 67 percent were males. 71 percent of the participants had an education level of a high school diploma or less. 62 percent were between the ages of 18 and 40, and 32 percent between the ages of 41 and 59. Only 6 percent were over the age of 60. The large majority spoke English (77 percent) with the remainder speaking Spanish. Although prepared for multiple languages, researchers encountered no waterway users who spoke Vietnamese. Males accompanied all females who were interviewed.

Summer (88 percent) is by far the most common season for river activity followed by spring, winter and fall. Only 28 percent visited throughout all seasons. Nearly half reported coming to the river 2-3 times a month, with the vast majority (88%) visiting most often on the weekend as opposed to a weekday.

Zip codes of individuals were captured to generally identify their places of residence. The most common residency of survey participants was the adjacent area of Channelview, followed by surrounding communities such as Northshore, Baytown, Cove, Galena Park and others nearby.

**Communication Preference Findings:** The majority of respondents indicated they prefer to obtain waterway information by visiting the area on the day of their activity and without conducting their own research prior to activity. Most recalled observing Site signage, but they could not pinpoint where or specifically what the signs communicated.

- An overwhelming majority -- 67 percent -- would like to be provided information at the waterway on the day of use
- 41 percent indicated that they did not have a second information preference beyond obtaining information at the waterway (although given the opportunity to cite other information options)
- 17 percent or less identified receiving information through media sources such as television or through print, Internet and other methods as their first preference for finding information about the waterway

Based on focus group and Site survey findings, communication initiatives should deploy signage that uses illustrations in addition to words. This method would help to overcome any literacy barriers. Flyers in both English and Spanish should be distributed within high-traffic areas and be consistent with signage. Peak seasons and weekends offer the most optimal time to reach waterway users.

## **II. EPA REGION 6 | SAN JACINTO RIVER SITE CONTACTS:**

- a. Remedial Project Managers: Valmichael Leos, Gary Miller
- b. Public Liaison/Community Involvement: Donn Walters
- c. Media Contact: Jennah Durant

## **III. FEDERAL & STATE ELECTED OFFICIALS**

### **U.S. Rep. Brian Babin**

District 36  
Washington D.C. Office  
316 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: (202) 225-1515

### **Texas State Senate:**

#### **Senate District 15: Senator John Whitmire**

Capitol Phone: (512) 463-0115  
Capitol Address: P.O. Box 12068, Capitol Station Austin, TX 78711

#### **Senate District 6: Senator Sylvia Garcia**

Capitol Phone: (512) 463-0106  
Capitol Address: P.O. Box 12068, Capitol Station, Austin, TX 78711

### **State Representatives:**

#### **House District 127: Representative Dan Huberty**

Capitol Phone: (512) 463-0520  
Capitol Address: P.O. Box 2910 Austin, TX 78768

House District 143: Representative Ana Hernandez Luna

Capitol Phone: (512) 463-0614

Capitol Address: P.O. Box 2910 Austin, TX 78768

House District 128: Representative Wayne Smith

Capitol Phone: (512) 463-0733

Capitol Address: P.O. Box 2910 Austin, TX 78768

IV. **SJRWP COMMUNITY AWARENESS COMMITTEE** (in addition to U.S. EPA Region 6 and RPs)

GOVERNMENT ENTITY OR NON-GOVT. ORGANIZATION
<b>Harris County Commissioner – Precinct 2</b>
<b>Harris County Attorney’s Office</b>
<b>Harris County Public Health &amp; Environmental Services</b>
<b>Harris County Public Infrastructure Department</b>
<b>Houston-Galveston Area Council</b>
<b>Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</b>
<b>Texas Department of State Health Services</b>
<b>Texas Department of Transportation</b>
<b>Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife Department</b>
<b>Port of Houston Authority</b>
<b>Galveston Bay Foundation</b>
<b>San Jacinto River Coalition</b>



## STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

EPA Region 6 maintains mailing list(s) for this project and facilitates a wide variety of contacts to ensure and maintain ongoing awareness

### V. KEY AREA AND LOCAL MEDIA CONTACTS

#### COMMUNITY MEDIA:

Baytown Sun

Highland Star/Crosby Courier

Lake Houston Sentinel

#### METROPOLITAN HOUSTON & HARRIS COUNTY MEDIA:

Associated Press (AP) Houston, Texas

Enfoque Deportivo\*

Free Press Houston (FPH)

Houston Business Journal

Houston Chronicle

KHOU TV 11 (CBS)

KPRC TV 2 (NBC)

KRIV TV 26 (Fox)

KTMD TV 47 (Telemundo)

KTRK TV 13 (ABC)

KUHT TV 8 (PBS)

KXLN TV 45 (Univision)

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\* Enfoque Deportivo a Spanish language newspaper reporting national, international, and local news special reports. Free to the public, the publication is distributed to major restaurants, and markets in the Hispanic population. Enfoque is a bi-weekly publication with a circulation of 20,000 in the Houston, TX DMA.

**VI. PUBLIC MEETING LOCATION(S)**

**Highlands Community Center**

604 Highland Woods Drive  
Highlands, Texas

[Others TBD]

**VII. SITE INFORMATION**

Stratford Branch Library  
509 Stratford St.  
Highlands, Texas 77562

## VIII. OTHER INFORMATION SOURCES

### Available online information about the San Jacinto River Waste Pits Superfund Site:

EPA Region 6: [http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/texas/san\\_jacinto/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/texas/san_jacinto/index.html) <or>

[http://www.epaosc.org/site/site\\_profile.aspx?site\\_id=6534](http://www.epaosc.org/site/site_profile.aspx?site_id=6534) <or>

<http://www.epa.gov/region6/6sf/pdffiles/san-jacinto-tx.pdf>

Examples of topics or information available at this web site include:

- Site Background, Frequently Asked Questions, and Comprehensive Glossary of Terms
- Public Participation Information and Documents (e.g., Community Involvement Plan)
- Project Design Progress Reports, Work Plans
- Facility Siting Updates and Reports
- Performance Standards Updates and Reports
- Site Maps and Photos
- Site Documents such as Settlements, Record of Decision, RI/FS Reassessment Reports
- Ways to Stay Informed About Site Activities

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